

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: Warwick University
Unit of Assessment: Warwick Business School
Title of case study: Reducing Inequality in European Performing Arts
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The research conducted by Dr Deborah Dean provided the first reliable benchmark study of how age and gender affects the employment realities of professional performers across Europe. The research has influenced the practices of professional bodies, resulting in trade union organisations changing their codes of practice and introducing new measures designed to address age and gender inequality. The research provided a concrete resource for international performers' unions to use in employer negotiations and contributed to political debate and led to a House of Commons Early Day motion on gender inequality in the arts. It also led to the launch of an online petition receiving over 10,000 public signatures, and triggered the creation and implementation of the EU Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee's Framework of Actions.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Age and gender in broadcasting and the performing arts have long been recognised as contentious issues. Previous national-level data had indicated the existence of a disadvantage for professional older women performers (actors) in relation to their male peers. Before the publication of Dean's research there was no evidence providing a European-wide picture of any gender inequality issues in the performing arts.</p> <p>As a result of her expertise and previous research (2005, 2007) in the area of gendered disadvantage within the performing arts, Dean was commissioned in 2008 by the professional actors union, the International Federation of Actors (FIA), as Principal Investigator of the study 'Age, Gender and Performer Employment in Europe', funded by FIA and the European Commission. This was part of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007). The study demonstrated for the first time a European-wide picture of the degree to which female actors suffered systemic gender and age inequality in their access to work, pay and career longevity. This provided concrete evidence regarding the lack of equal opportunities on the grounds of gender and age within the performing arts.</p> <p>The research was based on an online questionnaire designed in four languages led by Dean, with support from Dominick Luquer (FIA General Secretary) and Dearbhal Murphy (FIA Deputy General Secretary), and feedback from the FIA Gender Steering Group. The survey was the largest and most comprehensive of its kind, distributed to male and female unionised professional performers across Europe (within FIA affiliated unions) and was completed by 2174 respondents in 23 countries. In addition, European FIA (EuroFIA) union members carried out structured and semi-structured interviews with gatekeepers such as agents and TV commissioning executives.</p> <p>The findings, published in the 2008 report 'Age, Gender and Performer Employment in Europe', showed that the professional experience and career development of female performers shared wide systemic disadvantages spanning across international borders. The research findings provided a unique snapshot into the professional experience of performers in Europe. They highlighted disadvantages in career development for female performers in comparison to their male counterparts in relation to age and ethnicity. Evidence showed that women's careers in television, film and theatre lasted on average 11-15 years, whilst men enjoyed longer careers (averaging 16-20 years). The research found that ethnicity and gender were interrelated, affecting employment opportunities for minority ethnic female performers. The study findings also identified inequalities in pay and media representation of female performers, with women being overrepresented in the lowest income group of performers (61 per cent reportedly work infrequently with limited choice).</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dean, D. (2008); 'Age, Gender and Performer Employment in Europe'. Report to European Commission and the International Federation of Actors (FIA). Available at: http://www.fia-actors.com/uploads/ENGLISH.pdf. Report provided to project sponsor. 2. Dean, D. (2008); 'No Human Resource is an Island: Gendered, Racialized Access to Work as a Performer', <i>Gender, Work & Organization</i>, 15 (2); pp. 1-21. <u>Peer reviewed journal article.</u> 3. Dean, D. (2007); 'Performing Industrial Relations: The Centrality of Gender in Regulation of

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Work in Theatre and Television', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 38 (3), pp.252-268. Peer reviewed journal article.

4. Dean, D. (2005) 'Recruiting a Self: Women Performers and Aesthetic Labour', *Work, Employment and Society*, 19: 761-774. Peer reviewed journal article.

Associated grants:

1. Co-funded by the European Commission and The International Federation of Actors (FIA). Awarded to Dr Deborah Dean. Total award £4,000 from January 2008 to October 2008.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The combined impact of the research has been to raise awareness and influence agendas for reducing gender inequality in the performing arts sector. It has provided an evidence base for trade unions to lobby for better employment conditions, influenced change in EU policy, and stimulated public debate around issues of gender inequality in the arts.

The findings of the research were communicated to audiences of policy-makers, employers, employees and performers through a series of events at UK and European level. Over 120 participants from Europe attended a two day EuroFIA Gender Agenda conference in September 2008. The final report launch event in the European Parliament in January 2009 was hosted by the then Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for the Dublin Constituency, and was attended by European politicians, employers, performers and the wider media. Parallel communication events in seven other European countries were also held at national levels. These events generated international press and media coverage, provoking wider discussion of the research findings. Press articles from across Europe directly referenced Dean's research findings and helped to raise awareness of inequality in the performing arts within the public domain.

Resulting from the media attention the report received, an online petition was set up in February 2009 by UK trade union, Equity. The petition called for urgent action by UK broadcasters to address the gender imbalance and engaged members of the general public with the key research findings. Over 10,000 signatures were received and the petition was used in conjunction with the research report to confront programme commissioners and arts funding bodies to act more positively in consideration of their gender equality obligations under the Gender Equality Duty of 2007. In addition, following the EuroFIA 2008 conference, an Equity steering group was set up in response to Dean's research engaging performers in discussions on performance opportunities for older women.

In October 2011, the EU Audio-visual Sectoral Dialogue Committee and its European social partners approved and adopted 'The Framework of Actions on Gender Equality'. The Committee made explicit reference to Dean's research and the research findings were used in the preparation of their action framework to address gender equality, particularly the section on gender portrayal. The General Secretary of Equity trade union has stated that "employers within the performing arts are signing up, adopting the Framework and, for the first time, are actively engaging in conversations and actions to promote gender equality. This particularly benefits actors in countries with traditionally weak industrial relations". The Framework of Actions is also being used by European national social partners to advocate gender equality in the workplace of audio-visual performers and other workers within the sector. Within the UK, the underpinning research and its findings were recognised by the Houses of Parliament and influenced the proposal of a formal early day motion (no. 699 in 2008–09) in 2009. The motion was signed by 48 MPs urging the Government, broadcasters and producers to take note of Dean's research findings and to take action to ensure equal opportunities for female performers, so that the real lives of real women are reflected on stage and screen.

The research has also been adopted by performer trade unions as a negotiation tool and in their efforts to influence future policies and legislative actions in the European Parliament. The Deputy General Secretary of FIA confirmed that the research received significant interest from the international FIA members in North American, Latin American and Africa and has been taken up in different European groups. All FIA regional groups have been involved in discussions on gender equality, which was previously not the case. This resulted in two key impacts that were triggered by

Dean's research: (1) the development of the Good Practice Handbook; and (2) the re-launch of the FIA Charter. Dean's research findings were taken up by FIA and became the underpinning influence that shaped the creation of the organisation's 'Handbook of Good Practice', published July 2010. The Handbook outlined over 50 good practices to promote gender equality in the performing arts and was adopted by all FIA affiliated unions across 12 European countries. In conjunction with Dean's research report, the Handbook formed an integral part of FIA's activity in lobbying for EU legislative change combating sex and gender discrimination within the performing arts, as there is currently no EU legislation that specifically addresses the industry.

Dean's research impacted the internal policies and standards of international performer trade unions (FIA) and UK unions. In September 2012 the FIA Congress redeveloped and passed the FIA Charter for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities committing over 100 FIA member organisations in over 70 global countries to actively promote equality in negotiations, contracts and collective agreement. Importantly, it committed these unions to creating the conditions within their own structures to encourage women members to play a full and active role. FIA introduced statements committing the organisation to action for equality. It was the first time the charter included important statements on equality which had initially been completely absent from its constitution. The findings also impacted the internal policy and practices of the UK trade union Equity, and in 2012 resulted in modifications to the organisation's rule book to include specific references promoting equality within the organisation.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Evidence of Impact on the policy and practice standards amongst representative bodies of professional performers:

1. **General Secretary, Equity.** The General Secretary can corroborate claims that the research provided an important evidence base and made a significant contribution to raising awareness of gender equality issues within the performing arts industry and on the standards and practices of Equity. She can testify to the impact on Equity's rule book (source 5) and confirm the establishment of the Equity steering group (by actresses Pauline Moran, Kate Buffery and Jean Rogers) in response to the findings.
2. **Equity online petition:** <http://www.gopetition.com/petition/24658.html>. This provides evidence that the research reached a wide general audience and contributed to raising awareness, triggering collective action.
3. **FIA Charter For Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities.** This document makes reference to the research key findings and evidences the inclusion of language on gender equality. Available online: <http://www.fia-actors.com/uploads/2010-Gender-Charter-EN.pdf>
4. **Equity Rule book** (December 2012): This confirms changes to codes within Equity's Rule Book (2012) issued to all 36,786 members with the inclusion of new codes: [3.1.1.7]; [3.1.1.8] and [3.2.17]. Available online; <http://www.equity.org.uk/documents/equity-rules-december-2012/>

Evidence of Impact at UK Policy level:

5. **House of Commons, February, 04 2009 Early Day Motion based on the study was tabled in the House of Commons by Janet Anderson MP.** This is evidence of research significance being recognised by the UK government and its impact in contributing to government debate. (<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2008-09/699>)

Evidence of Impact at European and International Policy level:

6. **Deputy General Secretary, International Federation of Actors (FIA).** The Deputy General Secretary can testify that the research has influenced FIA's activity on a European and International level and that it was a critical factor that contributed to FIA modifying its Charter (source 4) to include specific reference to gender equality.
7. **Handbook of Good Practices to Combat Gender Stereotypes and Promote Equal Opportunities in Film, Television and Theatre in Europe (FIA)** (July 2010). Makes specific reference to the research being the stimulus for the development of the good practice handbook "...the report and research was necessary to raise awareness about the problem. And it made it clear that we need to change the reality! We need to find solutions. And we need

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to see what good practices we can learn from. The result is the Handbook of Good Practices (p.6)". Online, from http://www.fia-actors.com/uploads/Engendering_EN.pdf.

8. **European Commission (2011). EU Audiovisual Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee Framework of Actions on Gender Equality. October, 2011, pp. 1-22.** Evidence of the research influencing union and employer commitment to encourage gender equality at European level. The Framework of Actions was produced by the Joint Working Group on Gender Equality chaired by Dearbhal Murphy (see reference 5 above for further corroboration). Available online http://resourcecentre.etic.org/spaw_uploads/files/AVSDC-FoA_Gender_Equality_EN.pdf

Evidence of impact on public consciousness and debate in relation to the performing arts at UK and wider European Level:

9. **List of press articles hosted on FIA website, (European coverage).** Evidence of the extensive press and media coverage the research received and its international reach across European countries. Online, from http://www.fia-actors.com/en/news_815-0109-6021.html
10. **Stage News press coverage (UK).** The following links provide evidence of research informing public audience of issues around gender inequality in the performing arts through press media.
 - 'Majority of female performers believe gender works against them', *The Stage News*, published Thursday, October 23, 2008,
 - 'MPs urged to take action over female performers' pay, *The Stage News*, published Tuesday, January 29th, 2009, <http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2009/01/mps-urged-to-take-action-over-http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2008/10/majority-of-female-performers-believe-gender-works-against-them/female-performers-pay/>
 - 'Female actors get less pay and shorter careers', *The Stage News*, Wednesday, December 3, 2008, <http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2008/12/female-actors-get-less-pay-and-shorter-careers/>